

Spastics News

Defend local
democracy,

says John Tizard

p3

Executive
Council
candidates p9



Alex Jagger starts out; Ben Smart gets there.



Fundraisers go their own way

Between them, Alex Jagger, 47 and Ben Smart, 17, raised over £7,000 for The Society last month by cycling round Britain.

Alex, who comes from Harlow in Essex and is disabled as the result of a car accident, rode his tricycle from Clacton-on-Sea to Berwick on Tweed, then into Cumbria, through Lancashire and Wales down to Cornwall, round to Kent, through London and back to Clacton. Between 2 June and 21 August he covered

2,000 miles and visited 65 holiday camps.

Ben, son of Tim Yeo's secretary Charlotte Smart, planned his trip from Land's End to John O'Groats on his own and completed it in 15 days, arriving 2 August.

The idea was to spend each night at a youth hostel, but one evening a few miles out of South Molton in Somerset, Ben decided he had had enough for the day and bedded down in a field.

He was woken at 11 p.m. by rain, so he pedalled back into South Molton and found shelter — in a milk float. "The milkman woke me at 5 a.m. the next morning and gave me a free pint."

Alex had his adventures too, negotiating steep hills. On a hill in Devon, the camber of the road suddenly steepened and Alex found himself in the hedge. "I ended up at the bottom of a deep ditch which had high weeds so no-one could see me from the road." In the end he got himself out, minus his glasses. But at the next holiday camp he was given a pair that had been left behind by someone else. "They were better ones than my own."

During the trip his brakes failed once and he had to have 6 new tyres. Ben wore his rear tyre down to the tread, but apart from one puncture his Raleigh behaved very well.

Both cyclists enjoyed being alone.

"You can stop when you want and absorb the smells and sights of the countryside," said Ben.

Alex is experienced at solo cycling: this is the sixth trip he has made to raise money for a good cause. For Ben it was the first time.

Such determination and stamina makes one feel humble. As Charlotte Smart said of Ben: "I didn't realise how many hills he'd have to walk up."

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Union challenges Integration

Parents' hopes are raised in vain

A commentary published on 5 September by the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers, expresses concern about the likely effects of the 1981 Education Act.

While giving qualified support to the principle that wherever possible, children with special needs should be educated in ordinary schools, the NAS/WT believes that parents of those children are being misled into thinking that special needs will in future be met within an ordinary school. "To raise false hopes among parents who already have many problems to contend with, in the knowledge that these expectations are unlikely to be fulfilled in present economic circumstances, is a grave indictment of the Government's policy on special education."

The Association, has a membership of 157,000, 120,000 of them teaching in schools. It blames the Government for not providing adequate resources to match the new regulations.

"At the present time there is little to suggest any intention to allocate extra funds. Without these resources the Act cannot be effectively implemented."

The consequences, it believes, will be serious for staff and all children in both ordinary and special schools, whether they have special needs or not.

The NAS/WT is "deeply

worried" that the plan to place children with special needs in ordinary schools coincides with government proposals for LEAs to close special schools.

The Association would like to see the right of appeal extended. "Schools through their governing bodies, as well as parents, should have the right of appeal to the Secretary of State against the decision of the LEA to place a child in mainstream education".

The NAS/WT is also concerned about the demands which children with "learning difficulties" will make on teachers. While it supports the principle that statements should be made of children's educational needs which will require LEA's to provide special education, it believes that teachers should be properly paid for this "additional burden."

"The schools must try to adjust to the aspirations of the Act," says Fred Smithies, General Secretary of NAS/WT, "but sentimentality is no substitute for hard headed commonsense. Protecting the interests of pupils will require teachers to oppose the intentions of people who think that integration of pupils with special difficulties can be achieved without worrying over such mundane matters as resources. Teachers must be specially wary of non-teacher experts who will not be asked to work each day and every day in the situations they are minded to create."

Flaws in the new Youth Training Scheme

Too old at 19

The Youth Training Scheme introduced on 1 September has already run the gauntlet of considerable criticism. It is said to be inadequately financed and to discriminate against disabled people. Alf Morris, a former Minister for the Disabled, called for a review of the scheme in the House of Commons in July.

The main problem is the age limit. While the Youth Opportunities Programme (YOP) had an upper age limit of 24, the YTS is open to all 16 year-olds, some 17 year-olds and disabled 18 year-olds. The programme lasts one year and combines planned work experience and on-the-job training with a minimum of 13 weeks relevant off-the-job training or further education.

But many disabled people are not ready to leave full-time education at 16, either because they have had difficulties to overcome or because they want to take one of the increasing number of full-time further education courses until they are 18 or 19. As the YTS rules stand, most disabled young people are ineligible for the scheme.

In Parliament, Alf Morris sited the case of a 19 year-old who had overcome special learning difficulties and was about to discuss a YOP when the government announced the YTS. "Judy's career officer was 'devastated' to have to tell her that

the plans he had been making for her vocation training had now to be scuttled. At 19, she was too old for the new scheme."

There are other criticisms too, particularly that one year is not long enough for disabled people to benefit from the work experience programme.

The Spastics Society supports the recommendation made to the Secretary of State for Employment by the MSC's Youth Training Board — and rejected — that the age limit for disabled people should be raised to 21 and the programme extended to two years.

A further appeal was sent to Norman Tebbit at the end of August by the National Bureau for Handicapped Students. But so far nothing has been won beyond an earlier promise to review the scheme in the autumn. "That would be too late for some people," said Alf Morris. "They want the dignity of being tax payers not the dependence of a lifetime on Supplementary Benefit."

He hopes that the unexpectedly low response to the scheme from able-bodied youngsters will encourage the Minister to extend the age limit for the benefit of disabled young people. "I hope he will have the common sense and the humanity to respond positively."



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Letters to the Editor

Spastics News 12 Park Crescent London W1N 4EQ

Manchester unreasonable

I was interested in the report in *Spastics News* of the conference held recently in Manchester.

I agree with the motion that called for more participation by disabled people in decision making which effects their own lives, providing that they attempt to produce a reasoned conclusion. As a parent serving on the Executive Council, there have been occasions when emotions could have swayed my thinking, and at that point I have welcomed the opinions of the good "mix" of disabled, other parents, and members not personally involved to reach a balanced decision.

This I find sadly lacking in the conference's call to The Spastics Society to immediately phase out their schools and residential centres. The need for these establishments is constantly monitored, and The Society readily closes them when their usefulness is no longer apparent.

Agreeing, as we do in principle, with the intergration of disabled children into ordinary schools, we would be irresponsible to force the issue unless we were satisfied with the alternative arrangements which at present are often inadequate. The expertise in The Society will be needed for sometime to come to help our more severely handicapped children, and for this group we must remain a vigilant watchdog.

Regarding residential centres, we must take care not to phase them out too quickly as there are some, particularly older, residents who feel a certain security in this type of cushioned environment. What we must do is to ensure that it is a home of their choice and not an institution. Conference must be aware that The Society is continually pioneering and moving ahead with new concepts on living and always welcomes new ideas to this end.

I agree that an updating of The Society's image of disabled people is overdue, but I cannot allow to go unchallenged the conference's call to cease discrimination against people with cerebral palsy. Who do they think has pioneered most of the improvements in their welfare in the last thirty years? I have no doubt that, but for The Society's efforts, several of the members passing this motion would have a much poorer standard of living today.

Eileen M. Milnes
Thorpe Cottage
Overthorpe
Banbury, Oxon.

Wheelchair Parents

Sue Jamieson's article about disabled parents in the August issue was very interesting and some of her comments so familiar.

As disabled parents too — my wife, Marion, had polio and is confined to a wheelchair; I am an ambulant spastic using crutches — I'd like a pound for

every time we've been asked: "How will you cope?" Sometimes it is difficult to answer questions like that.

Disabled parents share the same fears, anxieties and uncertainties about having children as any able bodied parent, only more so because there are extra physical and psychological problems to face. Even with help, the responsibility of rearing children rests with the parents and I am sure many disabled parents would like to know more about how one actually manages the daily problems. Perhaps Sue could write a follow-up article!

Children do acknowledge that their disabled parents are different from other mums and dads, but kids are remarkably adaptable and often cope better with this than we might expect.

Yet when our little "miracles" come in all covered in mud for the fourth time in a day, the meal's not ready, the washing won't dry, the car's broken down, they're screaming and driving you insane, your body's aching and longing for rest — all the shouting, worry, pain and tiredness melts away when they run up and say "I love you, today". Not only does it make all the hard work worthwhile but also it's all very normal.

Mike Long
72 Pen y Parc
Pontnewydd
Cwmbran, Gwent

Small is expedient

The Teignmouth affair shows that group holidays for handicapped people, whether mentally or physically affected, need re-appraisal.

I question whether handicapped people want to go on holi-

days in such large groups. This type of holiday does not provide a healthy, integrated atmosphere, especially when the guests come from the same hospital or residential home. Surely we all need a rest from people we see daily — although there may be a few friends who wish to remain together.

As disabled people, we need to be sensitive to the reactions and needs of Society. It can cause consternation in a resort to experience the "invasion" of any large group, whether mentally or physically handicapped, or, say, a hundred people with green hair. Both would draw the kind of attention which disabled people can well do without.

Without condoning discrimination of the disabled, I do sympathise with inhabitants of resorts who feel swamped by hordes of disabled people in wheelchairs, particularly if acceptable social standards are lowered. As a wheelchair bound person, I find it difficult sometimes to find a suitable niche for my chair in a pub or restaurant. "Disabled Lib" would say we have a right to be in these places. We have, but are we impeding the progress of integration by aggressively insisting on our rights? Do we really want ghettos of disabled holiday-makers?

As a holiday advisor, I see why these situations arise. It is vital for carers of severely handicapped people to have a break, and it is an indictment of Society that a carer can seldom find a replacement who can take the handicapped person on holiday. Many disabled people do not seem to have friends who are prepared to accompany them

on an equal basis, hence the need for large groups with often overworked, if willing, helpers.

I am not condemning group holidays, or undermining the thought and effort of organisers, but only suggesting that small is perhaps more expedient.

Merle Davies

The Spastics Society
16 Fitzroy Square
London W1P 5HQ

Volunteers?

On Saturday, 30 July, 1983, our group held a Flag Day in St. Ives. We have experienced great difficulty in recruiting volunteers to collect for the past few years, and on this occasion, only our own committee members were collecting. We have contacted various bodies in our area, but all bearing no fruit. If any local branch has a solution to this problem we would love to hear from them.

C. Hitchens,
Hon. Gen. Sec.,
West Cornwall Committee,
Cornish Spastics Society,
5 Peverell Road,
Penzance,
Cornwall.

Strawbacks

I read with some interest the article on the Pat Saunders Drinking Straw in the June edition of *Spastics News*. I sent for the product as I am a permanent user of straws and wanted to find out if the product information was of any use to myself.

In the article there was no evidence to the rigidity of the straw. The end that is put in the mouth is quite sharp and the clip fixing the straw to the side

continued on page 3

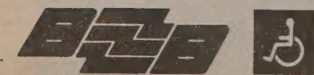
(The Director is on holiday)

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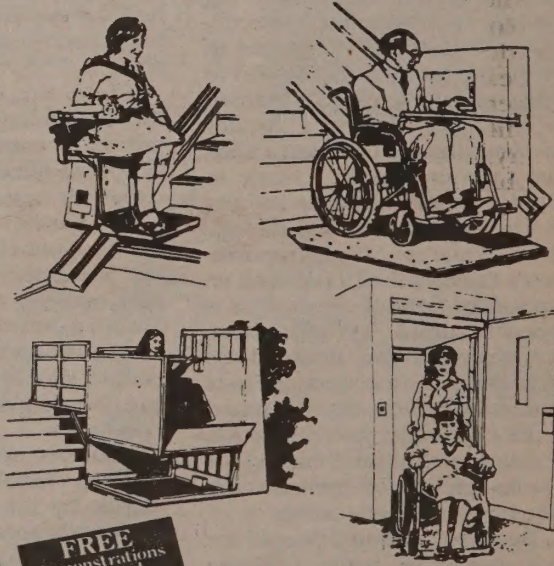
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Letters to the Editor

continued from page 2

of the cup comes off if you go into spasms while you're drinking.

I would imagine that these facts would preclude its use by athetoid people with backward head spasms. I hope that the straw will be fully assessed by the VAC (Visiting Aids Centre), but in the meantime I wonder how many other people have been buying these straws in the hope of getting value for money, but instead getting cut upper palates.

Rosemary Dawson-Shepherd,
48 Boundary Road, London NW8.

Good travel agent

Due to our involvement with various overseas visitors to courses and our participation in international seminars, Castle Priory College has been able to build up a good relationship with an extremely helpful travel agent who always manages to supply airline tickets for us at very short notice.

He has advised us that he is able from time to time to book flights at very short notice, and at very much reduced last-minute prices. He would be very happy to arrange short notice flights for readers of *Spastics News* when possible.

Readers interested in this kind of facility should contact the Senior Tutor at Castle Priory College.

R. S. Johnson,
Senior Tutor,
Castle Priory College,
Thames Street,
Wallingford,
Oxfordshire.

Defend local democracy—

or the disabled will suffer, says John Tizard

The latest White Paper, *Rates: proposals for rate limitation and reform of the rating system**, shows that local government is again under siege by central government. This follows eight years of government cuts in local authority spending targets. The present threat of a falling block grant, penalties and restricted rate levels represents a deadly combination for local democracy and public services. Millions of people in this country, especially elderly and disabled people, face a serious decline in the quality of their lives.

Government ministers are abandoning the traditional wisdom which assumed that there should be local autonomy over priorities and the administration of services and, ultimately, that local authorities should be free to determine expenditure and rate levels. Yet local councillors are democratically elected and are accountable for their actions to their electorates; they should not be accountable to any secretary of state or government at the expense of their own communities.

I would not argue that central government should concede autonomy in all affairs to local authorities: it must have some concern for total levels of expenditure and quality of services. However, it should not set binding targets for local expenditure, especially when that is financed by rates and not central government grants.

Parliament is sovereign —

* Cmnd. 9008, HMSO 1.8.83

REPORTS

Birmingham: Anti-discrimination legislation conference

Disabled v. able-bodied

Sixty people, less than expected, attended the Birmingham Anti-discrimination Conference on 3 September. About 20 of them were disabled.

Two of the speakers opposed anti-discrimination legislation, while one supported it.

Ronald Gerver, Chairman of The Society's National Consumer Group, said it was important to involve disabled people in policy decisions both within The Society and in local government. He was dismayed that mentally handicapped people had been excluded from the CORAD Report. He was for more legislation, but he conceded that the present laws concerning the rights of disabled people had not been enforced.

Professor Edward Marsland, Chairman of West Midlands Council for Disabled People and Vice Chancellor of the University of Birmingham, also spoke from the point of view of a disabled person. He understood the cry for stronger laws on anti-discrimination, but warned that careful thought must be given to legislation. He had several reservations: legislation all too often brings inequality in care rather than equality, and it does not necessarily help the less well equipped to obtain their rightful benefit.

Jill Knight, Conservative MP for Edgebaston, claimed that all political parties were determined to see fair play. She thought the 1983 anti-discrimination Bill was bad for several reasons. It put an impossible burden on the Equal Opportunities Commission to access discrimination. The wording of the Bill would be a lawyers delight. Huge sums would be required to set up the legislation, another commission, etc. and this money would be far better spent on direct help to disabled people.

After a forum in the afternoon, the meeting came together as a body to express opinion from the floor. It was a grumble session. There was general cynicism about politicians and bureaucracy: even if legislation was brought in, the extra expense would lead to cuts in services which would affect disabled people.

In summing up the Conference, Gordon Davies emphasised the need for consumer groups. In response to a point made by Ron Gerver, that legislation could be a means of educating the public, he thought that if this was so, "then perhaps organisations like ourselves should be reviewing the direction of our public relations effort."

He asked the disabled people present if they felt discriminated against. Sixteen of the twenty answered yes. The same number were in favour of The Society lending its weight to the pursuit of some form of legislation. Yet it was difficult to obtain a consensus from the rest of the Conference. Very few parents wanted legislation.

At last it was resolved "That

there should be positive action to implement the Education Act 1981. Further, that local authorities should be compelled to comply with the provision of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 that emphasises positive involvement by handicapped people in policy making decisions."

Alma Hill

Castle Priory course

Growing old gracefully

Thirty five people, ten of them with cerebral palsy, gathered at Castle Priory College on 4 July for a three day course on Growing Older as a Person with Cerebral Palsy.

It was a unique course because nearly all the speakers were disabled and at different stages in their lives. The aim was to throw light on the problems of ageing. Are they common to everyone? What is different for disabled people?

To begin with we played what seemed silly games. Each group of six people had to make a tight circle keeping their knees together. Someone was sent out from each circle and had to try and get inside again. As we played, we understood the meaning: we disabled have got to fight our way in to be accepted by other people. And it is true, still.

On Tuesday morning we learn how to cope with the changes and deterioration of the human body, and Dr. Margaret Agerholm told us about the physical needs of the older person with cerebral palsy. Then

we heard of individual experiences from Rosemary Dawson Shepherd, Bill and Mary Hargreaves and myself.

Then, after supper, Rosemary McCloskey, the tutor, gave us various situations to think about and act out in small groups.

On Wednesday we heard from Wendy Lane how it is to be a "borderline" person. In spite of being cerebral palsied, she has led a normal life as a school-teacher and a secretary. But as she gets older she finds she tires more quickly.

Valerie Lang told us how she had benefited from education at The Society's school and at college; how she lived as a student and had to borrow other people's notes to keep up with her studies; how the other students helped her fetch meals on a tray. She is now qualified and has a job and her own flat.

Finally Margaret Morgan, who knew us all in one way or another, talked about "Giving and Taking" as a disabled person. She distinguished between what disabled people need to take from able-bodied people — medical care, toileting etc. — and what they are expected to take — advice, unsuitable facilities, the Does He Take Sugar? attitude. Then what disabled people could give to able-bodied people — friendship, understanding, time, experiences — if only able-bodied people would realise.

From the summing up we realised that many of the problems of growing old are common to everyone, but that cerebral palsied people do have additional ones. We need to break down the isolation and share our experiences.

Marjorie Chappell

founded myths have grown up, often fostered by those who ought to know better.

"Local government expenditure has grown excessively over the last few years," is one charge. The reality is that during recent years local authority spending has declined in real terms by 3% while central government expenditure has increased. Local government expenditure has been more tightly controlled than that of central government. Also, local authorities have had to considerably reduce manpower levels in the face of increased duties and increasing demand for services.

Industrialists often complain that rate rises are an unfair burden leading to unemployment. This is not so. Rates have risen on average less than other costs and represent a small percentage of turnover. Industry benefits directly from local authority services.

Local authority expenditure as a whole has an insignificant impact on interest rates. Indeed,

deficit financing of current expenditure is forbidden. (Capital expenditure is another matter but need not concern us here).

No-one likes paying rates any more than they like paying income tax, but we all benefit from and demand a decent quality of service from local authorities. The cuts demanded over the last 8 years by both Labour and Conservative central governments have only served to decrease services and increase costs. Further enforced reductions, for whatever reason and in whatever form, would be catastrophic.

For both constitutional and economic reasons then, local authorities and their members of all political persuasions are opposed to the government's latest proposals. This opposition should now be joined by all those concerned with community services — clients, trade unions, community groups and local and national voluntary organisations.

The proposals are particularly

relevant to voluntary organisations who must decide how best to protect their clients; how far they should substitute for reduced statutory services; how in this climate they set about creating partnerships in service and planning and how cuts will affect their own income. They must also decide whether to campaign against cutbacks in the statutory sector and the philosophy behind those cuts.

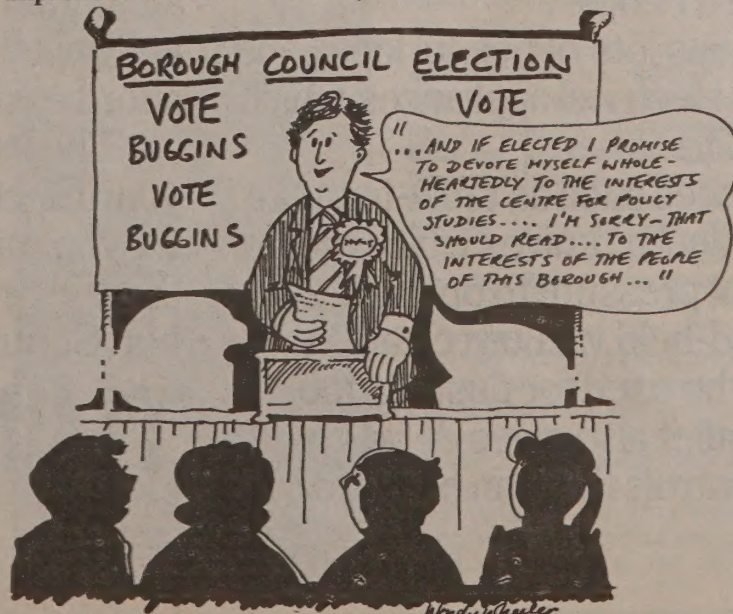
The rapidly increasing numbers of elderly people place even greater demands on social service budgets. So does new legislation like the Criminal Justice Act and the Mental Health Amendment Act. With many social services departments unable to meet existing statutory obligations, there is little chance of seeing new services introduced. Schemes to move elderly and mentally handicapped people from long stay hospitals into the community could be at serious risk, and authorities may avoid new joint-funded schemes — the losers will be the already disadvantaged.

The current political attack on the public sector and the values it represents offer extremely bleak prospects for those citizens who are dependent on community services.

Local government needs more resources not less, and more flexibility to meet its duty to serve the local community.

Britain is a wealthy nation. Our priority should be to redistribute, re-allocate and utilise this wealth for the benefit of the community.

John Tizard, The Society's advisor on statutory resources, is leader of the Labour group on the Bedfordshire County Council.





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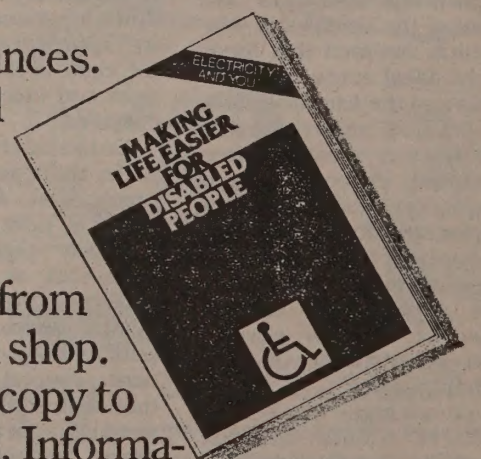
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INTERNATIONAL

I suppose it was inevitable that my studies of severe disability around the Far East should take me to the Republic of South Korea. Tucked away in the northern Pacific, it is a country we know little about except as a result of war. But it has a spastics society. This fact, combined with the implication that there was an awareness of cerebral palsy and presumably a problem, persuaded me to go.

South Korea has 38 million people living in an area about the size of the British Isles. It is a country of contrasts. There are several large and modern cities where today's concrete and glass rub corner-stones with the effects of war and the splendour of an ancient past. If you take Birmingham, add a little of Stratford upon Avon, and a local mountain, you have the UK equivalent of Seoul.

South Korea is a capitalist society: a good standard of living for the luckier ones, big business and, of course, the motor car. Korea has a thriving economy that has made its mark in the world's shipbuilding, electronics and ginseng industries — an economy influenced by the United States and its substantial military presence. Yet invasion by Communist North Vietnam, however remote it may seem to us here, is an ever present threat dominating local discussion and attitudes. Indeed, a dawn to dusk curfew in the city was only recently lifted.

The timing of my arrival in Seoul was not propitious. Korea was wet and bleak after a summer typhoon. There was mist where there should have been sun, rivers where there should have been streets, but taxis where they always were, looking for a client. In my box-like room in a hotel of 1,600 similar rooms dominating the centre of the city, I could have been anywhere.



Disability proved to be no bar to artistic activities at the CP camp in Korea.

South Korea: Co-operation can make the pattern work

by Derek Lancaster-Gaye

But my first meeting with the Korean Spastic Society soon focused my attention on handicap. I was to spend several days with them at a summer camp in the mountains overlooking North Korea. Two busloads of us, young severely-handicapped boys and girls and as many untrained young helpers, all in the charge of two youth organisers, set out on what for me was one of the best camping experiences I have had. The swimming, art, nature rambles and evening activities followed traditional patterns. There were mountain walks before a breakfast of seaweed soup and rice after a night on the floor, and countless other soupy concoctions

and rice, all eaten with little metal knitting needles.

It was the totally unpatronising involvement of the "helpers" that impressed me. They had answered a press invitation and had had no previous contact with handicap. The sheer professionalism of the two organisers ensured a smooth and trouble-free time.

I had one major problem: no-one spoke English and there is a limit to sign language conversation and knowing looks. A pity really, as there was so much to be asked and to be said.

The camp was the main activity of the Korean Spastic Society, a relatively new organisation and understandably short of

funds. For a country that has developed so far industrially, it is surprising that services for the disabled are so poor. Of course there are pockets of excellence, like the little centre run by German nuns, all qualified physiotherapists providing a Voigt-oriented regime for a group of severely handicapped CP infants; or the University's rehabilitation centre, producing excellent results in vocational training but struggling in restricted and impossible premises to provide a service for children.

Several regional centres offer some services, but parents have considerable difficulty in making the journeys and no special transport facilities are available.

Many families seem to opt for the hazards of city living merely to have access to the services.

I was told of many plans for the future, all dependent upon funds being available. But as is so often the case, the priority given to rehabilitation is low. With South Korea's precarious economy and heavy defence spending, I suspect that it will be many years before real improvements are brought about, unless there is overseas aid.

Current thinking and levels of knowledge are impressive, and there is a healthy awareness of the problems amongst professionals that can only be good for the future. But as in so many rapidly-developing societies, disabled people are left behind. One has the impression here that attitudes towards disability are not so much patronising as unaccepting. Disabled people are not permitted to become teachers, for instance, as school children should not be exposed to abnormality — an attitude that must surely have an effect opposite to that intended.

I was surprised too that in a society as technologically advanced as South Korea, technology was not part of the daily living or training of disabled people. Communication for the speech-impaired was still a major problem and even the Bliss board was not much in evidence.

But compared to so many places I have visited in Asia, South Korea is developing rapidly. Provided politics do not interfere, its disabled population can have reasonable expectations of the future. Their anxieties, their hurts and their aspirations, and those of their parents, will follow a pattern which we in the U.K. can recognise. The Korean Spastic Society has an important supportive and campaigning role to play. It has a lot in common with The Spastics Society which trod the same path 25 years ago. Here is an excellent opportunity for co-operation.



When I went to work as a Voluntary Assistant at Churchtown Farm, I didn't know what to expect (and, more to the point, what would be expected of me). I had heard about the Centre and knew that many of the activities which it provides for its guests are pretty adventurous, but beyond that I was in the dark, unaware that the next two weeks were to constitute one of the toughest challenges I had ever faced.

The voluntary assistants at Churchtown are the dogsbodies who do much of the donkey work which keeps the centre running. Tasks range from serving meals to helping out on outdoor activities, and for the most part it's hard physical work involving long hours.

Staff expectations of you are high. "They expect you to be able to do everything here — to swim, to sail, to rock-climb without getting vertigo..." commented one VA.

Because they assume that you are capable of doing it, you often do. Even using a pick-axe to dig a few holes in the ground, whilst exhausting and not really my idea of fun, brought me a

sense of satisfaction, because I had never had to test myself in that way before.

When you are out with a group, there's rarely any question of not doing something, even if you think you've reached the limit of your endurance. At times like that my only incentive was knowing that other people were relying on me to be there if they needed help. In any case, they were on holiday, not me, so I had to try to ensure that they got as much out of the experience as they wanted and not simply what I was prepared to give.

On occasion that was easier said than done. When I went rock-climbing with a group of mentally handicapped men, I needed as much help as they did, if not more, and it was only the knowledge that they had all made it to the top of the quarry that kept me going. Afterwards, I was glad I did make it. I found that I was much closer to them than I had been before.

Churchtown is not an institution in the usual sense. There are no rigid staff/patient divisions. The atmosphere is relaxed, and everyone is out to have a good time. No pressure is placed on the guests to live up to a pre-set standard of achievement. But the emphasis placed on abilities rather than on disabilities mean that even severely disabled people can find plenty to do.

Working at Churchtown taught me a lot, both about myself and about other people.

Can do!

Claire Tregaskis surprised herself

Martin Lazell



Despite having first-hand knowledge of physical disability, I knew almost nothing about mental handicap, and I was very unsure how to cope. Everyone else just carried on as normal, and I soon found myself doing the same. The only modification I had to make was to use less complex words than usual — and that didn't do me any harm.

The mentally handicapped people I worked with during my first week turned out to be a great bunch. I wasn't able to give them much help, but they were prepared to accept me as I was, and for what I could do, and we got on well together. In fact they were easier to work with than some of the physically handicapped guests, who were less than happy about surrendering themselves to my tender care.

Whilst my own disability made some jobs difficult, at other times it probably allowed me to achieve more rapport with the guests than if I had been able-bodied. It also meant that I was sometimes able to foresee problems and avoid them simply because I had to consider how I was going to cope myself.

Despite having to work harder than I'd ever done in my life — and learning the true meaning of "slave labour" — I very much enjoyed my stay at Churchtown. The positive attitude towards disability came as a great relief to me after having experienced many less enlightened approaches in the past.

Churchtown Farm Field Studies Centre in Cornwall offers short courses and adventure holidays to physically or mentally handicapped adults and children. It has full time professional teachers and care staff and is equipped to take up to 60 people either in escorted groups, families or individually.

The mild climate means that the Centre can stay open all year and make full use of the local environment — the river, woods, sea coast and moor. Courses in 1983 have ranged from "Winter Birds" and "Discovering the Countryside", through CSE and 'O' level, to "Gardens in Cornwall." They can involve caring for animals on the farm or finding out about plants in the garden. "Activity holidays" offer a chance to sail, canoe, camp and climb, but there are also less exhausting activities like fishing, photography, pottery and crafts.

Much of the Centre is purpose built with bedrooms, showers and toilets designed for people in wheelchairs. There is a heated indoor swimming pool, a library, lecture-room and laboratory.

Claire Tregaskis helped out at Churchtown between taking her degree and getting, she hopes, a job in publishing.

If you are interested in booking at Churchtown, or in joining the slaves, contact The Warden, Churchtown Farm Field Studies Centre, Lanlivery, Bodmin, Cornwall. Tel: (0208) 872148.

Fun and games in August



Four residents paused to be photographed with Ewart Morgan, the Festival's organiser. Left to right, Patricia Nash, Raymond Hurrell, Peter Harris and Geoffrey Harvey.

Kyre Park Festival

Radio hams from all over Europe and as far afield as Russia and Japan radioed their support to this year's Kyre Park Festival of Country Music, and around 4,000 people came to spend the Sunday of Bank Holiday weekend with the residents of Kyre Park in Worcestershire.

Some of the best country and western artists came along too. Tony Best and the Lazy Acre Roadshow were there. Their music club in Shrewsbury is very popular with Kyre residents and over the last twelve months it has raised £700 for

the Handicapped Holiday Appeal Fund.

Tennessee Country Band from Worcestershire performed; so did the Ramblin Band from Staffordshire and Coopers Country, who gave us back £40 of the £50 they raised.

In the evening 800 people crowded in to the marquee to hear Cotton Gin from Birmingham, Johnny Spencer from Bristol and Shiloh from Hereford. But the star was Mr. Guitar himself, Bert Weedon.

Even though attendance was down on last year, we hope the Holiday Appeal Fund will be the richer by £2,000 to £2,500.

Tony Russon

Daresbury Hall Sports

The first ever Sports Day at Daresbury Hall Residential Centre was held on 23 August. 35 competitors, including 9 from the Chester Division of Beaumont Products, took part. To allow for different degrees of handicap, competitors were split into 5 classes, each competing in 8 events.

A keenly contested 60 metre wheelchair race was won by 10 year old Nicola Meyrick (daughter of Chester's Production Manager), who finished only inches ahead of Bobby Palombella of Daresbury Hall. In the 30 metre and 60 metre running races, Chester's Steven Ditcher was invincible. At the end of the afternoon there was an obstacle race for members of staff.

All the handicapped competitors received a memento, and individual winners were presented with small trophies.

So successful was the sports day that everyone agreed it should become an annual event

naidex '83

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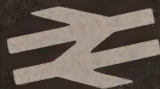
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COSMOPOLITAN / ORE

SUPERSPORT DAY



Athlete Judy Livermore leads a determined team and they lost to the team led by...

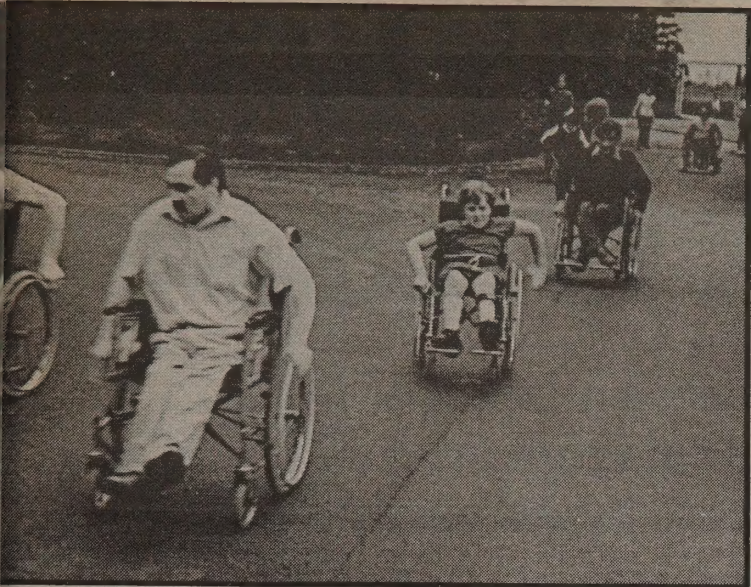
Playtime

Toys and equipment for disabled children

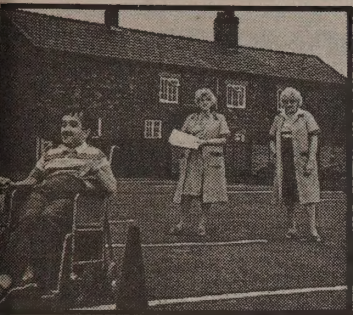


The Connoisseur Prone Board is welcomed for younger children. £99 from Connoisseur, 404 Longbanks, Harlow, Essex.

Clifford Roberts



Above, Bobby Palombella is out in front in the 60 metre wheel-chair race, with John Lloyd lying second, Nicola Meyrick third and Paul Tomlinson fourth. Left, Dennis Holland negotiates the slalom watched by Elsie Haddock and Joan Nicholson, instructors in the workshop, and that more of The Society's centres should be invited to take part.



Philip Baile



...m in the tug of war, but in the color.

Association for Physical Training. Proceeds went to The Society, to help meet the cost of sending competitors to the United States for the 1984 World Games for Disabled People.

Besides watching all sorts of demonstrations — aerobics, martial arts, trampolining, squash, snooker, swimming, scuba diving, fencing and gymnastics — visitors could often join in alongside a sports personality.



Singer Helen Shapiro meets Josephine Meaney from Daresbury Hall.

Delarue Sports

The idea of a Sports, Leisure and Recreation weekend for disabled people has now become an annual event in the South East Region. The emphasis is on participation: disabled people come along and have a go at sports and hobbies they might not have met before. The weekend is organised by regional staff and local spastics societies in West Sussex and Kent.

This year it was held at Thomas Delarue School, Tonbridge, Kent from 5-7 August. 70 people stayed over the weekend, and we also had 200 day visitors.

Friday evening got off to a good start with a performance by the Kemp Town Syncopators, a new jazz group which provides entertainment for charity.

Next morning the programme included wine-making, croquet, a radio ham, javelin, discus and shot, badminton, gardening for the disabled, pottery and archery. Some people had a go at everything, and some just lay in the swimming pool.

After lunch we had special



Above, Disc jockey Don Moss takes on Alfred Marks at snooker.

Above right, Sharron Davies talks with an enthusiastic disabled visitor.

Dickie Henderson, Alfred Marks, Jack Howarth and Don Moss were among members of the Stars Organisation for Spastics who came and gave their support.

At the end of the afternoon, Esther Rantzen and Maureen Lipman helped auction famous sporting memorabilia — though what Cliff Richard's suit was doing there remains a mystery.

Roger Vaughan



Roy Williams (left) gets a lesson in Kendo from Simon Crittenden of the Tonbridge Kendo Club.

events. Graeae, the group of disabled actors, was a great success.

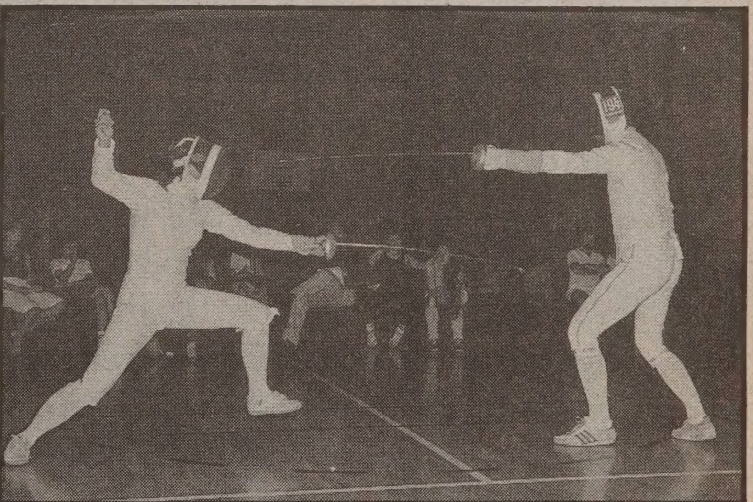
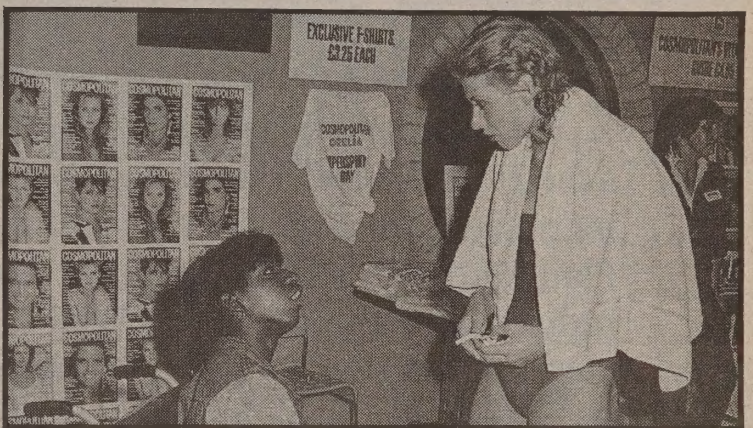
Japanese martial arts were demonstrated by the Tonbridge Kendo Club. After a short period of meditation and philosophical explanation, they belaboured each other with wooden staffs in the most head-splitting fashion.

Later there was an extra-

gant display of flying by Tonbridge Radio Flyers, the local radio-controlled model aircraft club.

On Sunday other activities were added — supervised yoga, racing pigeons, flower arranging and — the most popular event of the day — weight training by the "Y" Treefellers Weight Training and Keep Fit Club.

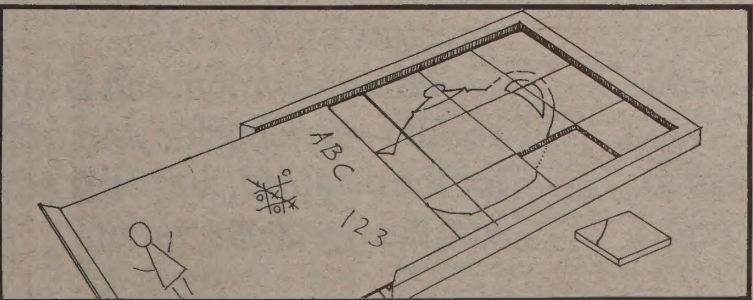
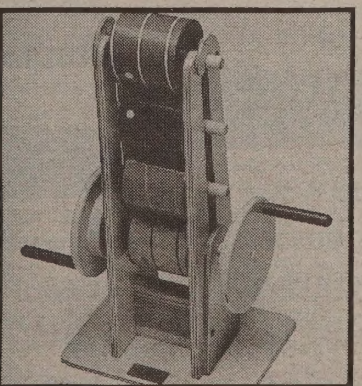
Will Eades



Fencing champion Kathy Taylor goes into action against a one-armed contestant.



The Roller Tower, right, suits left or right handed children. The child can use both hands, or one with assistance. The pattern changes as the rollers turn. This popular toy costs £10 and comes from a range designed for mentally handicapped people by the Leeds and District Active and marketed on a non-profit making basis. The new catalogue, price 45p (incl. p & p) is available from Rachel Hirst, Leeds and District Active, 3 Roxholme Terrace, Leeds.



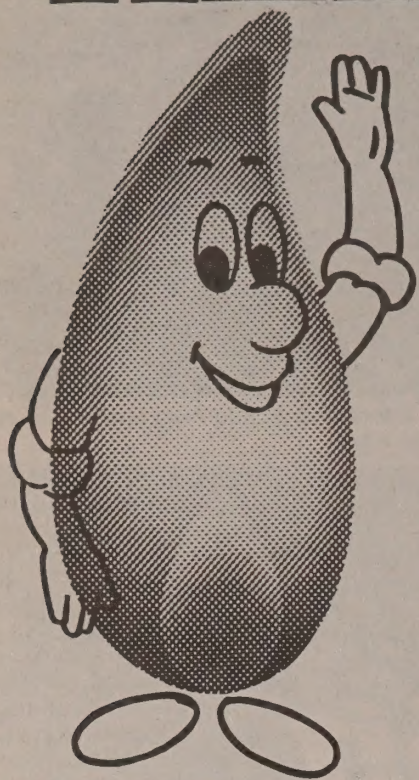
This Simple Jigsaw can be stored tidily in its box while the lid doubles as a blackboard. One of a range of toys designed for handicapped children. £5.50 including VAT (p & p extra) from Burnbake Workshops Ltd., 26 Aberdour Street, London SE1 4SJ.



The Munster Horse aids mobility. Seat height is adjustable and there is good back support. Small size, shown, is £74.96. Everest and Jennings have updated their brochure, *Special Aids for Children*, and are now marketing a Brio Rehalg range for younger children. Write to Everest and Jennings, Princewood Road, Corby, Northants.

SMP Landscapes, manufacturers of playground equipment and outdoor furniture, can provide equipment for handicapped children: double width chutes, as above, larger safety tyre seats and saddle assemblies for their swings, and even a bed swing. A Design Advisory Service for play equipment and play area planning is available. Catalogues and information from SMP Ltd., Horton Road, Datchet, Berks SL3 9ES.

"HELPFUEL WAYS TO PAY FOR GAS."



British Gas offers its customers a number of ways of making it easier to pay for gas. It also operates a Code of Practice which protects customers in real hardship who find it difficult to pay their bills.

If you have problems in paying for gas, here are some of the ways in which we can help you. If you know anybody who is having difficulties and might benefit, please pass the information to them.

SPREAD THE COST OF GAS

Many people find quarterly bills a headache. It can be easier to spread the cost of gas more evenly through the year with our Budget Plan. You pay a set amount every month, rather than waiting for a quarterly bill to arrive. If you have a bank or Post Office Giro account, you can pay by standing order, or by direct debit through banks.

If you find it easier to put a little money aside towards your gas bill every now and then, you can buy Gas Savings Stamps. £1 Gas Savings Stamps are on sale in showrooms and some sub-post offices in England and Wales. To give customers more flexibility, the gas and electricity industries have agreed to accept each other's savings stamps. You can buy stamps whenever you like and use them to pay the gas bill when it arrives. In Scotland, you can use Royal Bank of Scotland savings stamps to pay for gas.

SLOT METERS

Most people now prefer to get a quarterly bill for their gas, and the use of slot meters is declining. You can have a slot meter if you have problems in paying your bills. But it must be safe and practical for us to put one in. A slot meter may cost you more.

Some elderly or disabled people find slot meters difficult to reach or awkward to operate. You might find it more convenient to change to a credit meter, and get a quarterly

bill. Changing from a slot meter to a credit meter is free. Alternatively, you could have the slot meter moved to a more convenient position. Moving a meter up to 3 feet for a disabled person costs £3 plus VAT. We can also supply special extended handles to make slot meters easier to operate, free of charge.

CODE OF PRACTICE

The Code of Practice leaflet "Paying Electricity and Gas Bills" gives advice on how to spread the cost of electricity and gas. It also offers advice to people who cannot pay their fuel bills because of genuine hardship.

Gas has to be paid for. But we want to help where there is real hardship. The Code of Practice explains how to get help and the rules on cutting off supplies. In many cases, an acceptable method of payment can be agreed. But we can only help you to avoid disconnection if you let us know that you are finding it difficult to pay.

ASK US TO HELP YOU

You can ask for a copy of the Code of Practice and get advice on paying for gas at your local gas showroom. Or you can telephone us — the number is in the local directory under "GAS."

The showroom can also tell you about regular servicing for your appliances and aids for the disabled, and offer advice on gas safety and energy conservation.

HELPFUEL SERVICES FROM THE GAS PEOPLE.

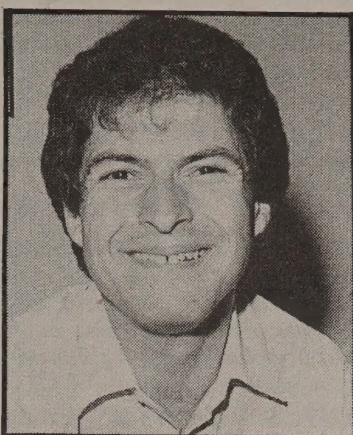
Candidates for the Executive Council 1983

The AGM is to be held at the Imperial College of Science and Technology, London, on October 15



*** Jan Hildreth, 50**, is a business consultant who lives in London. He has a cerebral palsied son. He has been a member of both the Executive Council and its Finance Committee since 1980 and of the Aids Advisory Committee for the last two years. He is Honorary Treasurer of Contact a Family which aims to bring together families with handicapped children for mutual support.

Special interests: finance, education and overall policy.



Blodwen Ellis, 37, is a housewife. She has been Chairperson of Retford and Workop Group for the last six years, and a member of the Midlands Regional Committee for five; she is on the Region's Finance Subcommittee. As Chairperson of the Governors of Kilton Hospital School and Bassetlaw School, she has been involved with two ESN schools. She was elected to the Bassetlaw District Council ten years ago and she is also on the Management Committee of the Citizens' Advice Bureau.

Special interests: making all types of buildings accessible.

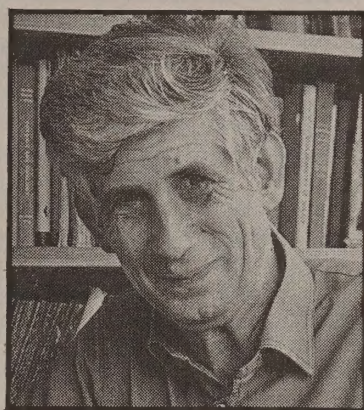


Dorothy Cottle, 57, is a housewife who has a cerebral palsied daughter. Her involvement with disability in South Glamorgan started thirty years ago when she joined the Cardiff and District Spastics Society, becoming its Appeals Officer and then Chairman. She is also Chairman of the Society's Wales Region. On the Cardiff Community Health Council she has special responsibility for the mentally handicapped, and is also a member of the Wales Council for the Disabled. Other activities past and present include being a founder member of the Friends of Mena House and Sully, running the Cardiff Day Centre over many years and the Nimrod project.



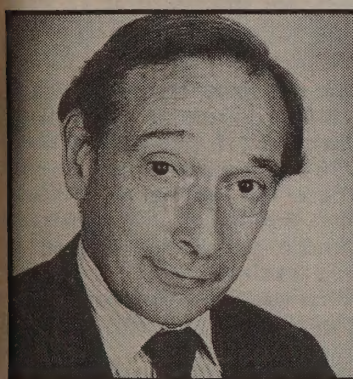
Special interests: residential care for the multiply handicapped.

Ronal Gerver, 36, is a linguist who holds degrees in German and European Studies. He works as a translator. His personal experience of cerebral palsy has made him aware of the problems faced by disabled people. He is Chairman of The Society's National Consumers' Group and a member of its Educational Advisory Committee. He is also an Executive Member of the Association of Disabled Professionals, and Honorary Secretary of Home Opportunities for the Disabled. In north London, where he lives, he is a member of the North London Spastics Association and an ex-Treasurer of the Islington Disablement Association. Special interests: anti-discrimination legislation, education and the physical rehabilitation of disabled people.



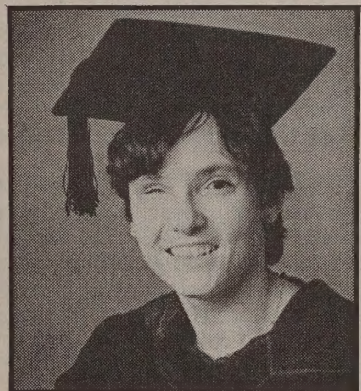
*** Ronald Firman, PhD, 54**, is a Senior Lecturer in Geology at Nottingham University. He has been on the Executive Council for five years and is a member of its Management Board. His personal experience of cerebral palsy, his many contacts with cerebral palsied adults, his professional connections with industry and local authorities have all fuelled his work for The Society. He has been on various committees and working parties including Services and PR and Fund Raising. He is President and Trustee of the Association of '62 Clubs and President of the Nottingham '62 Club which he helped to found. In Nottingham he is also a founder and past President and Chairman of the Portland Club for the Disabled. He is on the committee of the Nottingham and District Friends of Spastics group. Special interests: leisure and recreation; education; research.

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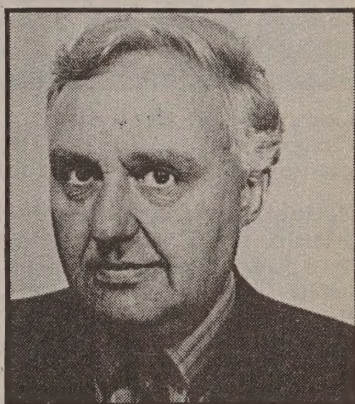
*** Peter Rigby, 54**, is a company director. He has been on the Executive Council since 1975 and is a member of the Management Board. He is Chairman and founder of Hornsey Centre for Handicapped Children, and a founder of Habinteg Housing Association. His experience of local government extends over 25 years; he has been a Mayor of Hornsey and Leader of the Haringey Council. At present he is a member of the City of London Corporation and Chairman of the Social Services Committee. He is also a magistrate and a member or chairman of various public bodies. Special interests: that the Society obtains maximum value out of the moneys it raises and spends for the benefit of cerebral palsied people.

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Sharon Hughes, 31, has just obtained her M.Ed in Special Education. Her research was into "The integration of children with cerebral palsy." Cerebral palsied herself, she was educated at Birtenshaw Hall and Thomas Delarue. She took a degree in Psychology in 1979. She is a member of the North West Regional Committee and Convenor of the new North West Consumer Group. In Bolton, where she lives, she is Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Bolton and District Spastics Society. She is also a member of the Management Committee of New Hyde Lea (a short stay home), Bolton Access Group, ADAPT (Action for Disabled Persons' Transport), and Chairpersons of Bolton Dial-a-Ride. Special interests: education, residential care, consumer involvement, anti-discrimination legislation.

Martin Price, 49, is a solicitor and lives near Bath. He has been Honorary Secretary of the Bath and District Spastics Society since 1963. Most recently he has been involved with the building of a hostel for disabled students who attend Trowbridge College. He is Chairman of the Local Insurance Tribunal for Bath and Trowbridge (DHSS), and is also Vice-Chairman of the Avon Family Practitioner Committee. Special interests: the welfare of disabled students who have left school.



William Higgins, MM, 62 is an architect and was, until he retired recently, the Surveyor of the Fabric of Leeds University. He has a cerebral palsied son.

He has been associated with The Society for 21 years, and is now Chairman of the North-East Regional Committee and of the Leeds and District Spastics Society. Through his work he has accumulated professional contacts in industry, local government and the university. He is a member and former Vice-Chairman of Leeds Works Centre Management Committee; a member of Leeds University Committee for Facilities for the Disabled, and of the Yorkshire and Humberside Council for Further Education. Special interests: research into the cause of cerebral palsy, special aids, housing for the disabled.

*** Eileen Milnes, 53**, is a housewife who has a cerebral palsied daughter. She has been on the Executive Council since 1977; a member of the former Resources Committee and now of the Management Board and the Living Options Group. She is a Trustee of the Samaritan Fund. Until she moved to Oxfordshire her work was in the Manchester area. She has been Honorary Secretary of the Manchester and District Spastics Society, a member of the Management Committee of the Sale, Altrincham and District Spastics Society and Chairman of Friends of Rodney House. Her membership of the Greater Manchester Advisory Council involved her with housing for the disabled, and she helped to found ADAPT (transport for the disabled).



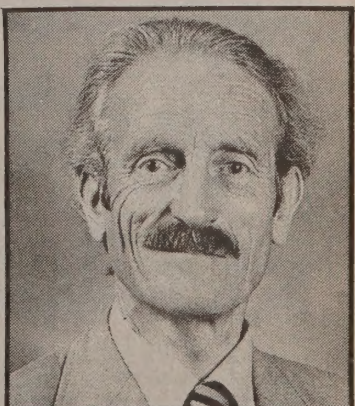
Special interests: housing projects, transport, encouraging disabled people to take a more active role in decision making.

William Hargreaves, MBE, 63, was a member of the Executive Council and Chairman of the Employment Committee during the 1950s. He retired from The Society in 1982 where he had been Industrial Liaison Officer and Senior Clubs and Holidays Officer before coming Head of Recreational Services 1974-80 and Principal Industrial Liaison Officer 1980-82. His experience, and the insights he has gained from being cerebral palsied himself, have led to an energetic retirement. He is now Chairman of the Trustees of the

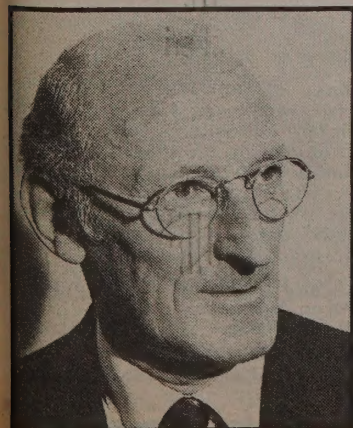
IYDP Holiday Fund and Vice-Chairman of the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation Holiday Committee. He is also a member of The Society's London Regional Committee and Chairman of the local Brent Association. Special interests: can medical research throw light on the extra ravages that old age may have on the cerebral palsied?

** retiring member seeking re-election.*

Richard Sharp, 65, is an architect who has had considerable experience of local and regional committees. He is now Chairman of both the West Regional Committee and the Cheltenham and District Spastics Association, which he helped to found in 1952. He is Vice-Chairman of the Gloucestershire Association for the Disabled, and Chairman of its Committee for Low Dependency Housing. He is also a co-opted member of the Gloucestershire County Council Social Services Committee, a member of the Cirencester Committee for Spastics and Handicapped, and a Trustee of Cheltenham Youth Trust. He had written a booklet



on *Housing for Disabled People*. Special interests: "One Society" — professionals, volunteers, local groups and central organisation working together.



Share Your Problems

With Margaret Morgan

Nigel Tuckett



Weighty problem

My daughter, who is 35, is in a wheelchair all day and she has very little exercise. She loves her food and she is really very overweight. I have tried to help her to diet but she gets so angry and we always end up having a row. I give in and she has a second helping or I turn a blind eye to the extras that I know she is eating. It's getting much more difficult for her to transfer from her chair or for me to lift her and I know she should lose weight. Can you suggest how I can help her?

Being overweight and trying to find ways to get slimmer are really nationwide preoccupa-

tions these days, aren't they? But you are quite right, it is even more important for someone in a wheelchair whose mobility and movements are restricted to try to keep her — or his — weight down. It is generally acknowledged, however, that until the overweight person really wants to get thinner you will be fighting a losing battle in trying to restrict what she eats. Eating can be a response to all sorts of tensions and problems and for those whose lives are inactive it can often counteract boredom or frustration.

Do you think your daughter might like to join a slimming club or attend classes run by Weight Watchers or a similar organisation? Most of these organisations welcome people with disabilities, and bursaries and special rates are nearly always available to those with low incomes. Many people who go to weekly classes find a whole new social life and a much wider circle of friends, as well as losing weight less painfully.

Could one of your daughter's friends suggest to her that she might like to go to a local class? Knowing how close and tense relationships within a family can be at times, I feel your daughter is more likely to accept the suggestion from a friend.

Details of Weight Watchers

classes and of slimming clubs will be available in the telephone directory or from your local library or Citizens' Advice Bureau. I do hope your daughter will decide to try one out.

There are also some very good illustrated cookery books for slimmers and your daughter may well enjoy preparing her own special meals. Most large bookshops have a wide selection of new publications.

Angry young man

I work in a small residential hostel and I would be glad to have some advice about one of our residents. Paul is 20 and he has cerebral palsy. He has no speech and he gets very frustrated when we can't understand what he wants. In fact, he sometimes lashes out unexpectedly and most of us on the staff have suffered bruised shins or even bites on the arms. I really feel sorry for Paul, but sometimes I do lose patience with him. Can you give me any ideas about how we can understand him better?

It is indeed difficult to know how to help a young man like Paul. His parents or the staff at his school may be able to tell you how to recognise his signs and interpret them. And what about his friends and other residents? You may find that he has a special relationship with someone who can understand him and with whom Paul has

"conversations". It is also possible that Paul was taught one of the special signing systems of communication, like Makaton or Paget Gorman, or the Bliss symbols which can be pointed out on a special board. His school or parents will know whether Paul is familiar with any of these systems and how he responds to them.

It is not surprising that Paul should get so frustrated, but it is important to try and help him to understand that violent behaviour is not acceptable and that you will not be able to go on tolerating his kicking out at members of staff — or anyone else. I expect this problem has been discussed with the officer in charge of your hostel and with other members of staff, and it may eventually be wise to seek expert advice from a psychologist or doctor. I should, however, talk Paul's problems over with his social worker in the first instance, provided that your officer in charge is happy for you to follow up yourself. Paul's social worker should be able to tell you about the different systems of communication which are being used these days and advise you about how Paul's behaviour might be modified.

This is actually quite a common problem, though not an easy one to resolve, I fear. Many disabled people do, however, settle down as they mature and I expect Paul is, in many ways, still behaving like an angry teenager.

OBITUARY

Jack Crosby MBE

The North East Region of The Spastics Society was saddened to learn of the death of Jack Crosby MBE, at the end of May. For many years Jack, who was a founder member of the Leeds and District Spastics Society, worked tirelessly in promoting its services. His unstinting involvement culminated in the building of the Leeds and District's own sheltered work centre in Osmundthorpe Lane, and even after this success, he continued his work for the group.

Apart from his involvement with the Leeds group, Jack served as Treasurer to the North East Regional Committee over several years, during which time he was instrumental in initiating many important and innovative projects.

In many ways, Jack dedicated his life to The Spastics Society, and he will be greatly missed by all those who had the honour of knowing him.

Ian Croft

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Uphill Ski Club, who were featured in Valerie Lang's article 'Downhill Racer' in the June Issue of *Spastics News*, became a separate charity in their own right in July this year. Their new registered number is 287106, but for the time being they are still based at 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ. Tel: 01-636 1989/580 1039.

The Project Phoenix Trust will be considering applications during the next month for their 1984 overseas study visits. These are Leningrad in early May, Sweden 17-26 August and Greece (based in Athens) in September and October. Although the holidays are for handicapped people, able-bodied helpers are also recruited. Handicapped tourists need not bring their own helpers. Details from Valerie Saunders, 68 Rochfords, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes MK6 5DJ.

Gemma, the organisation for disabled and able-bodied lesbians, has just issued its Autumn newsletter for 1983, including dates of forthcoming events and regional news. Available in printed form or on cassette. Contact Gemma, BM Box 5700, London WC1N 3XX.

A report on the "Working Towards Integration" conference sponsored by ACE and The Spastics Society will be available at the end of September. *Integration: A new partnership?* by Ann Shearer also discusses issues and questions raised on the day and speculates about a pattern of change.

CLASSIFIED

VESSA VITESSE POWER CHAIR left side control, kerb climber, 16 in. seat width. Good condition. Recently serviced £700 o.n.o. Tel: 01-767 4626, ext. 27 — Alison or Beverley.

MALE PENFRIEND REQUIRED for young woman, aged 24, who although slightly disabled does not use a wheelchair. She attends a 'younger disabled unit' helping others and her interests are cooking, writing, tapestry, listening to records and watching TV. Please write to Box No. 111, *Spastics News*, address on page 12.

FEMALE PENFRIEND REQUIRED by young spastic man aged 28 years who likes football, reading and writing. Please write to Drew Bustard, Scotsraig Home, 18 Park Road, Paisley, Scotland.

What's On

Correction. Active's Autumn Conference is to be held on 29 October, 1983 at Damascus House, The Ridgeway, London NW7 and not 29 September as announced previously.

Political party conferences. Literature on The Society will be available at the SDP and Liberal Party conferences in September. Two fringe meetings have been organised. "Integration" will be the subject at the Labour Party Conference at the Bedford Hotel, Brighton, on Wednesday, 5 October at 5.30 p.m. "Disability Benefits" will be the subject at the Conservative Party Conference at the Claremont Hotel, Blackpool on Wednesday, 12 October at 5.30 p.m. Further details from Amanda Jordan, Lobbyist, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ.

Movement and Dance as an Aid to Communication is the subject of a weekend course to be held at Castle Priory College on 30 September to 2 October, 1983. Run in conjunction with The Laban Art of Movement Guild, the course will investigate movement of the disturbed, disabled and handicapped, movement in communication, and the use of Rudolf Laban's movement theories in therapy. Applications to The Principal, Castle Priory College, Thames Street, Wallingford, Oxfordshire OX10 0HE. Tel: (0491) 37551.

Care of Children with Deteriorating Conditions is a course to be held at Castle Priory College on 5-7 October, 1983. Designed for medical and educational staff, field and residential social workers. The course covers mental and physical deterioration, and will discuss the social and emotional problems of the child and his family. Applications to The Principal, Castle Priory College, Thames Street, Wallingford, Oxfordshire OX10 0HE. Tel: (0491) 37551.

Project Ability is an exciting arts project for disabled people and by disabled people, to be held by Third Eye Centre, Glasgow from 8-29 October, 1983. Disabled artists, musicians, writers, actors and performers will be taking part in exhibitions, events, discussions and workshops based at the Centre, and spreading into the local community. The event is international in its scope. More details from The Project Co-ordinator, 'Project Ability', Third Eye Centre, 350 Sauciehall Street, Glasgow G2 3JD. Tel: (0491) 332 7521.

Inaugural meeting of the new Milton Keynes Active Group 11 October, 1983 at 7.30 p.m. at Queen's School, Whalley Drive, Bletchley. Anyone with an interest in disability is welcome.

Fitzroy Square are holding a one day course for teachers, careers officers and advisers involved in advising disabled teenagers and their parents about options when leaving school. The course, held at 16 Fitzroy Square, London W1 and on 14 October, 1983, costs £5 per head including coffee, lunch and tea.

Technology and Therapy in Special Education is an intensive day course to be held on 15 October, 1983 at Rose Hill Day School, Windermere Drive, Warndon, Worcester. Course covers a wide range of technical aids and equipment developed to help physically and mentally handicapped children. Course Director is Roger Jefcoate. Details from Mrs. B. Pidgeon, 67 St. Dunstan's Crescent, Worcester, WR5 2AQ. Tel: (0905) 54828.

SOS

Great Home Entertainments Spectacular at Olympia 17-25 September, 1983, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily. SOS will have a large stand selling raffle tickets and there will be celebrity guests.

Bob Hope British Classic Gala Dinner 20 September at Grosvenor House. Guests include HRH Princess Alexandra and former President and Mrs. Gerald Ford. Star cabaret including Bob Hope himself.

WHEELCHAIRS ASHLEY MOBILITY

Sole Distributors for Vessa Ltd's Range of Power and Hand-propelled Wheelchairs in the Midlands, Powys, Avon and Somerset. Also Everest & Jennings Distributors and BEC and Batracar Agents. Distributors for the Elswick Envoy car for the disabled in the Midlands, Avon and Powys. All these makes are available on 'Motability' H.P., to recipients of the Mobility Allowance. Always a good selection of secondhand power chairs in stock. Write for details and coloured brochures.
FREEPOST, Birmingham B25 8BR. Tel. 021-772 5364 or Ashley Mobility (Worcester), FREEPOST, Worcester, WR4 9BR. Tel. 28575 or Ashley Mobility, FREEPOST, Weston super Mare, Avon. BS23 3BR. Tel. 26011.

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**CADENZA (SN2),
Fron-y-Gog, Machynlleth,
Powys.**



Are you the family for Calvin?

Calvin is a 7-year old black child. A more lovable, likeable boy would be difficult to find, but looking after him involves a lot of hard work. In recognition of this we would be prepared to pay around £90.00 a week. Calvin cannot yet walk or talk but at times he helps with his feeding. Generally he has little interest in food which is why he is small and somewhat underweight.

However, he has one of the most infectious laughs you have ever heard and the biggest love of his life is motor cars! If you and your family have a motor car, then Calvin is ready-made for you.

Calvin has been in a children's home for almost four years. He sees his dad at fairly regular intervals and has a special aunt and uncle with whom he spends regular holiday periods. If you want a cheerful, happy bundle in your home, wrapped up in hard work with lots of rewards, contact me today — Gwenda Watson, Area 5, Social Services, 13 Brondesbury Road, NW6. Telephone 328 1767.

OUTLOOK



Motoring

Nissan Micra

My search for alternatives to the automatic mini has usually been among the larger cars with automatic gearboxes as options; there has always been a shortage of small automatic cars. Now the Japanese have recognised the gap in the market and introduced two new mini sized models, one by Suzuki, and one by Datsun, the Micra.

The Micra is designed with very large doors and plenty of space around the driving position, which makes it ideal for the disabled driver.

Inside, the seats are a little narrow and too heavily contoured to allow easy sliding into position. But once you are installed, everything comes easily and naturally to hand, with most of the more frequently used switches set on two stalks from the steering column.

Like most Japanese cars, the list of standard equipment goes on for ever, and certainly exceeds the automatic Metro. Little things reveal the thought that has gone into the design of this car — it is easier for the rear seat passenger to get in because the mounting of the front seat belts is on a runner which can be slid out of the way; the

spring-loaded seat backs flip forward at the touch of a lever.

The car was designed from scratch as an "economy" car in name only. On the road the performance of the 1 litre engine is not startling, but it does pull well and changes smoothly through the gears. The road and wind noise have been kept to a minimum and unlike many front wheel drive cars, the engine noise is well insulated. The steering, however, was disappointing. It is a little heavy and there is no power steering option. Taken as a whole, this Metro look-alike is good value for money. It has obviously been designed to out-perform its British cousin, and last as long.

Technical information

988cc 4-cylinder with overhead camshaft and 3-speed automatic gearbox.
Length 11 ft 9 in.
Width 5 ft 1 in.

Petrol consumption

Constant 56 mph, 52.3 mpg
Constant 75 mph, 37.7 mpg
Town driving, 41.5 mpg

Price

1 litre GL Automatic Micra is £4,650. Possible discount available for straight purchase.

Hand controls not yet fitted as the model is too new, but expected to cost about £150.

The resale projection for five years is very good as small economy cars are always in demand.

Further information

Datsun UK, New Road, Worthing, Sussex. Tel: 0903 68561.

Young Outlook

Space people or Earth magic?

Children's World is a world of drama, and it's making a world of difference to the pupils at 5 Somerset and 2 Avon schools for educationally subnormal children. For Children's World is a Glastonbury based charity, run by Arabella Churchill. Over the past year it has been running weekly drama workshops with classes of children in their schools, culminating in a series of festival days when the children and their tutors, the Natural Magic Theatre Company took the stage to entertain their families and school-mates. Children and teachers alike have enthused about the benefits of

the projects, and are now looking forward to a second year, with five actors trained by the Rathbone Theatre Trust in Liverpool. As the pictures show, the main benefit is the enjoyment for children and actors alike, and with themes such as "visitors from outer space", "sea and pirates" and "earth, natural magic and nature", it's a toss-up over who learnt the most!

Naturally, all this costs money, about £10,000 for the year. So far Arabella and her supporters have raised £3,300, and The Carnegie UK Trust have agreed to match up to £5,000, pound for pound. But Arabella needs much more. She has plans for a Children's World Omnibus, which needs £15,000, camping drama holidays for inner city children, adventure playgrounds, community film-making projects and the pro-



Left, a workshop on Nature and Earth Magic at Frome Critchill School in Somerset. Ben is singing accompanied by one of the Children's World theatre team. Right, Lee and other children at Selworthy School, Taunton are clapping and calling the Space People to come.



The cock is by Adora Iwuchuku aged 21, of the Crispin House Centre, Bermondsey.



The Thailand landscape is by Pisal Niyakul, aged 17.

N.B. The Book *Sex for Young People with Spina Bifida and Cerebral Palsy* by Margaret Wilkinson, is available by post from ASBAH for a total price of £1.56 to include VAT on postage, and not £1.52. Also available from The Society's Bookshop at 12 Park Crescent, and Sue Kendall, 16 Fitzroy Square, London W.1.



Dick Sharp of The Society's West Region presents Arabella Churchill with a cheque for £1,000 while Kathleen Sunderland looks on.

duction of specialised children's toys and equipment. The Spastics Society West Region raised £1,000 to keep the drama tour on the road. Dick Sharp, Regional Chairman presented Arabella with a cheque at Penrose School, Bridgewater, in June this year.

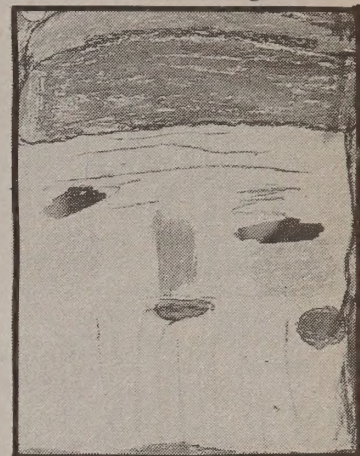
It's your last chance

We were puzzled as to why there were not more entries for the "Paint the Editor" competition. Then we realised — you were all on holiday! Now that you're back at school, you'll have plenty of time to complete your entries, so we've extended the closing date to 7 October. But hurry, before we get so attached to the prizes that we don't want to give them away!

Wendy Hughes

Art

An International exhibition of paintings by mentally handicapped adults and children has been on show recently at the National Theatre in London. The high standard of some of the work drives home the point that to be mentally handicapped is not necessarily to be artistically handicapped too. The show was organised in England by the Foundation Offering Relief of Disability through Education Arts and Healing.



By Lee Kwok Hung of China.



By Mok Yin-chun, 15, from Hong Kong.

Books

A Cry For Health: poverty and disability in the Third World

Edited by Oliver Shirley

(AHRTAG and The Third World Group for Disabled People, 16 Bath Street, Frome, Somerset. BA11 1DN. Paperback £2.50 including p. and p.).

Poverty and disability in the Third World is not a new topic. Whilst the developed world has been discussing it over the years and making nominal gestures towards the search for a global solution, the statistics have reached levels which are now difficult to grasp. Poverty and disability, each the scourge of the other, now account for an estimated 300 million people, or more than two thirds of the world's disabled population.

Malnutrition, poor sanitation or simply no sanitation at all, and an absence of pure water, together with inadequate health facilities are understandably the principal factors, yet the world has the knowledge and the skills to put matters right. As one contributor to this book puts it, "A few missiles less and we should have the funds too." But instead the skills and the funds remain in the developed world of the North and the Third World's disabled population increases by over 2 million each year.

Of course, much can be and is being done to remedy this imbalance between need and skills, not always in the right place nor necessarily with the support and understanding of the host countries.

Oliver Shirley's excellent collection of monographs seeks both to highlight these fundamental problems and to illustrate some of the remedies. An impressive array of internationally respected practitioners, too numerous to mention, cover such issues as prevention,

health resources, rehabilitation and the international politics that seek to influence our attitudes to this disturbing area of human suffering.

It is a little unclear to whom the book will appeal. Presumably not to the professionals as the views it expresses are professionally unchallengeable. Hopefully it will be read by the politicians and others able to answer why, if disability is preventable, it is not being prevented.

Derek Lancaster-Gaye

Lucky Break?

by Graham Hurley

(Milestone Publications, paperback £2.50 + 50p p & p available from The Society's Bookshop, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ).

Neil Slatter broke his neck in a motor cycle accident when he was 19. Asked how it really feels to be paralysed from the shoulders down, he says: "It's very simple. I'm just an able-bodied guy who happens to do a lot of sitting down."

This extremely readable biography charts Neil's four-year mental, physical and emotional adjustment to his paraplegia and his determination to lead an independent life. His mother describes the demands and pressures he placed on her, and his ex-girlfriend frankly explains why she decided first to look after him, then to leave him.

The book also records Wheelabout '81, Neil's wheelchair tour of the U.K., ostensibly to raise funds, but also to highlight the inaccessibility of most town environments and to demonstrate that disabled people are not aliens.

This is a gripping book, moving without being sentimental, positive without being over-optimistic. It is an insight into life in a wheelchair, but also a down to earth story with no heroes or martyrs, just ordinary people.

Helen Gray

Don't leave your lobbying too late

The Second Reading of Bob Wareing's Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons (Amendment) Bill will be on 18 November. The text will be published in October, but we understand that he intends to implement the principal recommendations of the CORAD Report by making it illegal to discriminate against disabled people in all areas.

The Second Reading debate will concentrate on general principles. But for many people it is the details — how and when the legislation can be enforced — that is of most concern. To obtain this detailed scrutiny the Bill must go on to the Committee stage, which can only happen if 100 MPs vote in favour of a "closure motion". If too few MPs vote in favour, the Bill could be talked out by an opponent, will fail to achieve its Second Reading, and will fall by the wayside.

If you feel strongly for or against the Bill, you should make sure that your MP is fully briefed. November 18 may seem far away, but MPs only attend the House of Commons when there is a Bill of particular concern to them, so it is important to get the date into their diaries. They usually visit their constituencies on a Friday.

If you want to talk to him or her rather than write a letter, check in your local paper or with the Citizens' Advice Bureau for the times of his advice surgery. If you are housebound or the advice surgery is inaccessible, write or telephone for a home visit. Although Parliament is in recess, your MP is still working. If you cannot contact him locally, mail and calls to the House of Commons will be redirected.

It is important to act now to be ready for 18 November.

We don't want to set the world on fire!

Police enquiring into a case of arson telephoned the *Spastics News* circulation department last month. They wanted a list of people living in the Paignton area who subscribe to the newspaper. Why? Because a copy of *Spastics News* was used to set fire to the house!



Leslie Gardner

Molly succeeds

"I'm scared, having to get used to life in England and work for exams in new subjects," said Molly Chib-Alur two years ago when she came to The Society's Thomas Delarue school.

But Molly has proved that she has got what it takes. With unfailing help from the staff at Delarue — Molly has quite se-

vere athetosis with the usual speech difficulties — she has just passed her CSEs with flying colours. She worked hard for the exams and now she will be able to start a two year pre-university course in Bombay.

"Coming to England helped me a great deal," she says. "I learned to think and act for myself. I had to since my family was 5,000 miles away! I am now studying economics, psychology and sociology and if I keep up the good work, I will go to university."

Everyone who knows Molly knows she will do well. Like her parents, who founded the Spastics Society of India based in Bombay, she will go on demonstrating in India what we often take for granted in the West — that physical handicap is no real barrier to high achievements and a full life.

England beats Scotland

50 members of the English athletics squad competed against a Scottish team at track and field events and football over August Bank Holiday. England won the track and field events while Scotland won the football match.

Besides being an important national event, the meeting was part of the preparation and selection of the Great Britain team which will take part in the 1984 International Games in the United States.

The overall standard of performance was high, with many people achieving results that compared well with winning distances and times at last year's International Games in Denmark. The establishment and coaching of an England squad seems to have paid dividends. Nearly all of them improved their individual performances,

sometimes up to 50 per cent. Four athletes, Norman Burns (Newcastle), John Simpson (Cleveland) and Ann Trotman and Jane Peters (Avon Swifts) must be strong contenders for gold medals in the USA.

There were outstanding performances by some of the Scottish team, particularly C. Keay and G. McConnell in the track events, who must be medal contenders next year.

Although facilities in Dundee were excellent — the competition took place on a recently laid "tartan track" — the Scots have not so far been able to set up a squad training programme because no money has been allocated for it. Hopefully this can be rectified soon, so that talented Scottish athletes will have the opportunity to compete on equal terms and with success against other countries.

Think Danish

Drummonds Centre was given a much needed treat after the recent problems when it went Danish for a day during August. Drummonds has six Danish students on a six months' placement as part of their studies, and two of them are so happy there that they have decided to stay on as houseparents.

In order to restore a more relaxed and happy atmosphere,

the students offered to take over for the day in true Danish fashion. It was in essence a leisurely time, starting with a continental breakfast from 9.30 a.m. to 10.30 a.m., followed closely by coffee and cream cakes at 11.00. Lunch, a traditional herring and cold table affair with fruit salad for dessert, was at 1.00 p.m., lasting until 2.45 p.m. A short pause for breath, and it was coffee and afternoon cakes at 3.30 p.m. Curried potato salad, wine, mallow and apple dessert were all part of the sumptuous supper which arrived at 6.00 p.m., followed by traditional entertainment and Danish songs by the students, with much audience participation. "Really, it was just what we needed," said Brian Roberts, Acting Warden.

Spastics News

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Sketchley Cleaners organised another National Dolly Week from 30 August to 3 September. One family who brought a bagful of dolly clothes to the Southfields branch in Wimbledon were the Byrnes. Michelle Byrne (7) was duly measured, and for every inch of her height a penny was paid into the collecting box. Olive Byrne helps Katie (2) who is cerebral palsied, to put her money in the box while Katie's twin, Lucy, holds some of the clothes. All proceeds from the Dolly Week will go to The Society.



Prize giving day at the Glencrutchery Road School, Douglas, Isle of Man, this summer included the first presentation of the William Curphey Cup for progress in communication. It was given in memory of William Curphey, who died early this year after many years' service to the Isle of Man Spastics Welfare Fund and The Spastics Pools organisation. The winner was 12 year old David Kelly (left) who was presented with the cup, and a replica to keep, by Mrs. Carolyn Culshaw. 18 year old David Holroyd (centre) received the Louise Quirk Cup for achievement during the year from Louise Quirk of Manx Radio. Anthea Molyneux (right) receives the Florence Corlett Cup from Mrs. Corlett.

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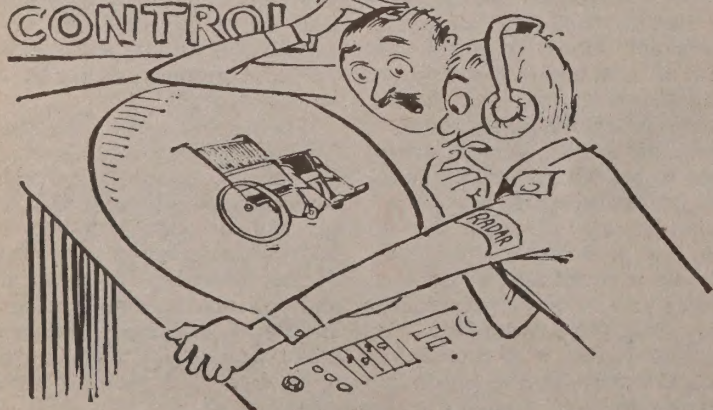
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